

XP-1052

PATENT

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 12-17 and 20-24 are pending and have been amended. Claims 6, 10, 11, 18 and 19 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

The objections to the specification are respectfully traversed in view of the above amendments to the specification.

No new subject matter has been added to the application.

The objections to claims 2-8, 10-13, 15-20 and 22-24 are respectfully traversed by the above amendments to the claims.

Claims 1-5, 9-10 and 14-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) in view of Ono (US 6,718,875), and under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of Otsuji (US 6,341,932). These rejections are respectfully traversed by the above amendments to the claims. Specifically, (1) the combination of original claims 1 and 6 into the currently amended claim 1, and (2) the combination of original claims 14 and 19 into the currently amended claim 14, are allowable as noted in Item #7 of the 5/24/2004 Office Action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon has been reviewed but is not considered material to the patentability of the invention.

No fees are due with this response. However, if an error has been made in the fee calculations, please charge any excess fees due and credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3377 under this general authorization.

It should be noted that the above arguments are directed towards certain patentable distinctions between the claims and the prior art cited. However, the patentable distinctions

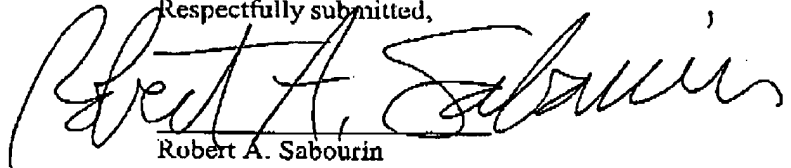
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between the pending claims and the prior art cited are not necessarily limited to those discussed above.

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that each rejection of the Office Action has been addressed and overcome so that this application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, withdraw the rejections and/or objections, and pass the application to issue. Should questions arise during examination, the Examiner is welcome to contact the applicant's attorney as listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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RAS/pc